THE

TRUE THINKER:

AN OCCASIONAL PAMPHLET

DEVOTED TO THE

Study of Mental, Moral, and Social Philosophy.

EDITED AND ISSUED BY

DR F. R. LEES,

Bushey Grove Road, Watford, Herts.

No. 62. MAY, 1896.

CONTENTS.

		PAGE
1.	How to deal with Drinking	1
2.	The Power of Truth	9
3.	The Promise of May	10
4.	Abstinence and the Apocrypha	11
5.	An Artist's Aspiration	12

PRICE 2d.

Per Post, 2s. per year. 50 copies 5s., post free.

For small sums Half-penny Stamps and Postal Orders best form of remittance.

The four previous volumes, *bound*, price 3s. each, per post. 5th vol. now ready.

VOLUME SIXTH.

HOW TO DEAL WITH DRINKING.*

By Dr F. R. Lees.

IN introducing the topic of the day to this special assembly, I do not presume to teach anything novel as to the action of alcohol on the living body, nor shall I repeat statements published in my 'History of Alcohol' in 1843, and in my volumes of 1856-7, on the physiology of the question. I will simply say, that I know of no discovery since that time which materially modifies, much less refutes, any important propositions then put forth—though of course there are many discoveries that confirm them.

To be frank, indeed, no evidence or argument of that kind goes to the root of the controversy, either with the public at large or the professions. I use the plural, because my position holds good of all objectors, whether medical, legal, or ecclesiastical. All objections, whether from nature, morals, or scripture, appear to me to be founded on mental assumptions of facts that are no facts, or upon partial inductions, or upon utterly false principles of dialectic.

The primary question to be settled is not so much one of objective fact, as of certain mental attitudes and methods. The facts, in the main, are too plain and palpable for any intelligent person to think of denying them point blank, and the fundamental problem really is, *What shall we do with the facts?* It is here that the differences begin, and until we treat facts on a common principle, by a certain rational method or rule, it is clearly impossible to reach a common conclusion. Dr Edmunds very pertinently asks, "How are we to deal with such an *initial* difficulty?" and has said, "It is useless to charge at a mass of evidence:" and he proposed to attack it "in the flank." For myself I adopt the chemical

* Delivered at the Bromley Conference, before a number of Medical Men and representatives.

and dialectical test, *i.e.* analyse the mass, and see whether the evidence be evidence at all, or mere confused feeling, or the stereotyped formulæ that pass as 'authority,' but are mere 'opinion.' I attack it in front as well as flank, and undermine it at the same time, that together we may haply show its foundations to be sand. Facts are neither evidence nor truth: but the conditions and objects *in* evidence, which may be 'expressed' truly or falsely. Truth is either the mental-perception or the verbal-expression of facts as they exist: fact being first, and truth second. "In that room are ten boxes of ripe apples," says a fruit merchant. Which is the truth?—the phrase, the apples, the condition of them, or the fact of their being there? The 'expression' is true, not the apples, nor their flavour, nor the boxes that hold them. No two persons can see alike unless their faculty of sight and position are alike. As with different spectacles we must see differently, so with different states of minds, we must needs think differently. Hence the fundamental condition of agreement is this:—Similar position to object or fact, and similar faculty and state with similar sign or word. Similar understanding must follow from the law of causality: for a difference otherwise would exist without a reason, which is fatuity. But this seeing is not proof or inference. Proof is a different matter; it involves comparisons of things, records of facts, and the formulæ called syllogism and inference. Reasoning is a strict process, with a fixed method, and an unalterable principle—namely, that your language shall be consistent in representing facts, and with itself. That is all—the all of science and philosophy—but that is everything save folly. Without the same process and the same premiss, therefore, we cannot have the same conclusion. "Words," said a great thinker long ago, "are the *counters* of wise men, but the *money* of fools:" and its truth is still illustrated in the barren controversies and confused babble of the day. Take, for example, the common misuse of the word 'Temperance' by writers, and even by learned men, who can quote but do not think. The virtue ceases with them to be an act of discrimination in use and quality, and becomes a mere matter of size or weight! Yet their language refutes their argument, for whenever they laud a glass of *good* ale, or praise a bottle of *good* beer, they condemn the bad, and introduce the element they had excluded! Good or evil quality is an essential element of all moral actions, and

Temperance can never be an unsuitable practice. It has been said that "we have to contend with a mass of educated opinion"—but no opinion is educated if it be ignorant, or an illusion. On this subject, there is probably more ignorance in the minds of educated men than among the millions of our laboring population, and I do not find any more exact reasoning. A few weeks ago, there was a discussion in the 'Personal Rights Society,' in which Mr Auberon Herbert, and the Radical parson, Mr Stewart Headlam, took part, but neither went to the root of the problem. They simply carried their prejudgments into the questions, and justified nothing. The first named held that each person had the right to do right, but no right to prevent wrong; the second condemned the use of the word Temperance by Canon Barker, as if it were synonymous with Abstinence!—which words no one out of Bedlam ever did say were the same. But the absurdity reached its climax in a Mr Sidney Gimson, who affirmed that "Freedom in the use of Alcohol would make people more rational in its use!" This is not simply foolish, for it either makes the word rational to mean more excess, or the act of more freedom to be the cure for excess! But Mr J. H. Levy was the most confident, and the most sophistical. Canon Barker had begun by assuming that the sale of alcohol and drugs differed from ordinary articles of trade: which fact made it a question of law. In making law and enforcing it, Mr Levy must take his alternative—the will of a minority or a majority. Which, professor? Canon Barker did not go down to the root, for that was not the question; but the word 'law' *implies* the 'right' to make law, and that right is simply the wisdom of preventing mischief, injury, or loss to each one of us. Hereupon Mr Levy tells the Canon that his *argument* would have equal weight if Synagogue, Unitarian Chapel, or Ghetto were put in the place of drink-shop, as the things put down by a majority! Certainly, if these be injurious to the community, were the community wise, these things would go with the drink-shop. But are they? Doing harm to me or mine is the only ground of preventive law: who disputes it? But no one has therefore the right to put down good. The Canon was not upholding the right of majorities any more than that of kings to do wrong: so the objection has no analogy with our case. Mr Levy goes on blundering. He says that "a law exacting free trade would not be a restriction!"

Why, pray? It would to a certainty suppress monopoly—and, in my opinion, that would be better than the present system, for it would destroy the corrupting political tyranny that now prevails—so much, indeed, as to hold its political authors in servile bondage. But the whole case is conceded, when Mr Levy admits that "a majority might justly override a minority in some cases—but not in all things." Well, we claim that the prevention of vast and varied wrongs to millions inflicted by the drink traffic—is just such a case.

These are specimens of the "mass of undigested opinion" we have to contend with—opinions of men educated in many ways, but worse than uneducated on the Temperance theme, and its underlying principles.

The question is exactly what Dr Edmunds says—'What is evidence and what is not? We must never conceal facts, and never shirk the real issue.' In the argument attributed to Sir James Paget, I notice a prodigious confusion, as follows:—"It is not possible to predicate that the English nation would have been either better or worse, had it always been an abstaining one." And why not? A son can say of his father who died of drink apoplexy or paralysis, that he would certainly have been better as an abstainer, and why could not the same be said of the fathers of a nation? This reminds me by contrast of the opposite opinion held by the great historian, Freeman, who did believe in the continuity of causation. He not only said that "History is past politics," but also that "Politics is present history"—alas! The statement of Sir James implies that strong drink is not strong, but an indifferent matter, which is a huge absurdity. The real point is the nexus between the drinking and the sequence: that ascertained, we can apply the fact as well to nations a thousand years ago, as to what is happening to-day. It has been satirically observed, that nothing is so false as facts, save figures: and the absurd use sometimes made of figures in statistics seems to give point to the remark. Hence, I insist, that facts as facts, and figures as signs of fact, can never prove anything as regards causes. Events follow their causes, and cannot therefore explain their own origin. Men drink water and alcohol together—but that act of faith does not explain which element intoxicates. Yet you *do* know somehow—by inference, if not by vision. Even the quibbling tipler never ascribes the staggering to the water. A simple

boy puts his finger to the beautiful blaze of a candle, and feels pain. The inference is irresistible, and, wiser than the drinker, once burnt he is for ever shy of the flame. The first glass of alcoholic liquor quite as clearly teaches to the observant uncorrupted mind the poisonous and seductive quality of alcohol—a quality which follows every dose of it, and which reveals its toxicology as clearly as any scientific text book—even the invincible law of the etiology of inebriety—against which prayer and preaching, law and logic, are directed in vain, for Divine omnipotence can neither be evaded nor overcome.

Sir James Paget lumps together all the facts of history that precede and all that follow, and then selects according to his taste or fancy those which he wants to unite as cause and effect! But that is Confusion, not Science. All the facts of yesterday are not the parents of all that happen to-day—certainly not of special children. In a genealogical inquiry the *whole population* will not enable you to trace your family tree. You must find out a special branch. Sir James does not distinguish the lines of causation—does not distribute the materials of his premisses. Each fact has its own father and mother, for cause is always dual and never single. It is clear, therefore, that when we ascertain the causal relation between ethylic alcohol and living tissue, we can as absolutely retrodict its consequences upon our ancestors as predict its effect upon our posterity. If the experience of the present be a guide for the future—so surely must it be an interpreter of the past—unless nature be a system of unreliable caprice and contradiction.

Take an illustration suggested by Sir James Paget's argument. "The Turks, who wear turbans and not trousers, are far less insane than Europeans, who wear pantaloons and chimney-pot hats. The Turks are mostly teetotalers—the Europeans mostly tiplers." Problem, which of the antecedents is related as causal factor to the greater insanity? Was it the breeches or the brandy? Which again was the cause of the greater sanity? The turbans or teetotalism? Are we to select according to taste or interest, or what test shall we adopt? Once again we come to the initial difficulty. What is evidence? And how shall we treat facts? The common plan is a case of muddling, and often done for the purpose of keeping the people in that darkness which feeds the selfish passions and interests of mankind—the first and final enemy

of progress, peace, and perfection: and all concerning a matter which any man or woman who honestly wishes, can resolve with infallible certainty for themselves by the trial of abstinence for half a year!

I repeat, that the value and validity of our inquiry rests entirely on the "nexus-between-events" being discovered—that is, how, or on what conditions, or in what circumstances, this fact is always connected with that. The clear knowledge of the cause is also the clear knowledge of the remedy. As you have well said, this done, "from the illusions of (or from) personal experience, we may appeal to the great masses of vital statistics in our national records"—while from our organized societies for life insurance, and our benefit societies, as well as from returns of medical men in regard to the habits and diseases of patients, we may acquire much information for the purposes of comparison, all tending to show the importance of the question, by the greatness alike of the blessings gained by abstinence and the evils accruing from drinking; and above all historically, and for ever, illustrating the grand truth, that in life as in death, in little things as in large, we human creatures must reap exactly as we sow. There is no room for chance in the universe of God—every movement of mind or matter (if there be a difference) is attended by its absolute result on the lines appointed by the Divine Being, the sole fountain of power, and we can no more conceive of any error occurring in the ledger of the past, than of any omission in the final Books of Judgment.

Above all, I wish the public could be made to understand the varied and disturbing relation of strong drink to all the metabolic processes going on in the intimate tissues and fluids of the human frame, but their imagination I fear is too torpid for making the attempt. If they but understood the legion of orderly changes that are needed, the delicate nature of the organic structures of cell and nerve, the manifold causes of weakness and disease associated with the perversion of structure and the production of poisonous forms of matter, I would ask them to consider why Temperance opposes and resists infection, and, on the contrary, why tipling invites disease and vastly augments mortality? Our susceptibility to the action of morbid agents is the greatest of all questions of health, for it is a Constitutional one. Life is the movement of organic matter, and it is subject to one universal law. It follows the

lines of least resistance. This is as true in physiology as in dynamics. Disease is the disturbance of a weaker structure by a stronger external agency. Health is the structure which incarnates the stronger energy, and resists the disturbing force. Life is the continued contest between forces tending to equilibrium. Life is marked by action and reaction for a given time. The conditions of health are sound structure, with plain food, pure water, fresh air, and abstinence from noxious agents and wasteful habits. All else is either fast life or smothered life: and the real dietetic vice is taking that which, by Divine law, produces all the varied degrees of disturbance from jolliness to insensibility—in short, all the graduated degrees of narcotism.

The invisible or hardly known Constitutional results of the alcohol fashion and the wicked alcohol monopoly, enormously exceed the more apparent injuries, in multitude, in suffering, in atrocity, and especially in persistence. They are hereditary for three generations before the family becomes extinct: for though one-third of the children never reach the maturity of manhood or womanhood, the survivors transmit their defects and disease to a second generation, who again, by inheriting the fatal weakness or disorganization, become victims eventually to the temptations of their surroundings—and sometimes, after having been safe-guarded by abstinence for half a lifetime, suddenly fall away in their later age, when the controlling moral nature has become feebler. As with the Influenza, so with Alcohol. Its worse sting is in its *tail*—to be seen after many days. When I look back upon my eighty odd years of life, and note how many scores of relatives, and hundreds of friends and neighbours, this serpent has destroyed—leaving families to be deteriorated in body and brain—I feel as if I were looking into a Chamber of Horrors: and when I hear or read of the 'exaggerations' of which we are falsely accused, I confess that my patience is sorely tried, and my indignation aroused by these unfeeling objectors. But the conquering and irrefutable truth abides. Distinguished physicians, at home and abroad, have now studied the question, and are frankly and fully proclaiming it. From St Petersburg to Paris and Madrid, from Vienna, Berlin and Berne to Christiana, round to Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, Dublin, to our own metropolis, the word has gone forth that alcohol is a poison, antagonistic to life. Soon, I trust, the great body of Physicians

and Physiologists will combine to make abstinence from alcohol a question of Sanitary Law, and declare for its application not only to jails, workhouses and asylums, to factories and to streets, but to those living streams and fountains, the tubes and tissues of the body, especially to that consecrated organ of reason and feeling, the brain, and so for the generations that shall follow us, strive to cleanse the too-long polluted temple of thought.

A discussion followed, during which some valuable observations were made. One doctor used the phrase 'reserved-power,' and made its greater or less amount the rule of accounting for recovery or relapse. He thought the paper was *too abstract*, and would have been better with more concrete illustrations. He thought it an exaggeration to make all cases of insanity to be due to drink: though in the Asylum with which he was connected, some 76 per cent were traceable to indulgence in that agent.

Another physician remarked, that what had been called 'reserved power' seemed to him to be only another name for 'health'—dependent on normal structure and the energy of which it was the organ.

Dr Lees, in reply, thought that the discussion strengthened the positions of the paper, for the two main points were that concrete facts alone, as facts, prove nothing: and that disputes were entirely the offspring of ambiguous words. He had given no opinion as to the percentage of insanity due to drinking, but of the 24 cases left after the 76 had been traced, who could tell how many were really due to inherited injury or defect due to drink? Sound teetotal brains don't go mad for love, or trouble, but their 'resaved power' resists. And finally, once more the one great vital-law reappears in the *abstraction* to which my friend on the right gives the name 'reserved power,' my friend on the left 'healthy structure,' and which in my paper I have called *Constitutional force*—three names for one and the same principle of final explanation.

In our next issue we will show how reason deals with facts.

POWER OF TRUTH.

THE Christian view of DUTY, or moral law, is, that in GOD as in Man, '*Perception* and *Power*' correspond and interlace as correlations. No being is *bound* to do what he *cannot* do. A *paralyzed* person cannot be blamed for not walking: responsibllity *ceases* where power stops. It is equally plain that every person or thing can act *only* according to its *nature.* Every different effect must have a different series of antecedents: otherwise, some change would arise without a reason, or a cause of change—which is the nonsense called 'Chance,' or the vice called gambling—the trust, not in God, but in nothing.

On the other hand, the *Perception of the order of Omnipotence* or invincible causation, in each duty, is what we call TRUTH—and, when you have this, and the *power* to obey its law, harmonious action *follows.* The true *idea* guides the instrument, and the *desire* is the *motive* power: the WILL resting in Love and Truth.

When a hypochondriac or a supposed paralytic fancies he cannot walk, let the word of *faith* and *truth* enter, and he *will* rise up and walk. That is not a miracle but a *law*—for Mind governs all matter—so called—the Divine LOGOS of St John's Gospel, represented as working in us as the Perceiving State or faculty. What *is* power, then, is *idea*—Divine Wisdom and Will: and what is a grand idea or emotion but the state of an AGENT?—and what is orderly motion in organic and conscious beings save real CONSCIOUSNESS or Knowledge? 'Knowledge is power.' 'But how shall I get it?' you say. By wishing for it. 'But how shall I desire it?' By *looking* for it: as you do for other things: and if you *desire* the best possible for you, you will not fail. But winking and blinking, and following fools and rogues, quacks and the devil, as the mad and stupid millions do, will keep you where you are and as you are! How long, will depend upon the resolve and the organization of those who *know* the truth. We are in the trough of a huge sea of ignorance, indifference, and interest—but the *Reaction* is sure to follow when the suffering has become severe enough.

THE PROMISE OF MAY.

I.

Back again, back again! in the April rain;
In the wind of March—the anemone's day;
And, heard of a few, in the whispered strain
Of burgeoning buds, of their burden vain;—
Flows into our being the Promise of May.

II.

O'er jungle-cane thick, or the deer's salt-lick
The largess is squandered, and sorrow 's at bay!
The tigress fawns on her mate, and quick
The antlered know, for the heart grown sick,
The savour of Life is the Promise of May.

III.

And in colder climes, to the louder rhymes
Of ice-bound waters released, and at play,—
In the 'minished nights of far-spent *hiems*
Surprised by the sun-god up betimes,—
A brief bright world is the Promise of May.

IV.

The summons was old to the crocus gold
Of Tempé its Vale, and the Appian Way:
On Greek and Sicilian meads 'twas told
To Zoe, or Chloe by Daphnis bold,—
Renewal of Love is the Promise of May.

V.

A conqueror rare, her Ides—here,—there,
Wake Earth from its trance, and the welkin is gay;
Bee, birdie, alike with the beast in its lair,
And Man before all to unhappiness heir,—
Acknowledge sweet Living 's the Promise of May.

May 4, 1896. F. Arnold.

ABSTINENCE AND THE APOCRYPHA.—We wonder if the people who cite equally from the canonical writings—or supposed canonical—and from the Apocryphal,—ever consider what is *implied* in their proceedings? We wish they would be explicit, and tell us what they mean? Do they really believe that the historical *record* of Jewish practices, or of inferred opinions, is a guarantee of the truth of the one and the excellence of the other? Do they fancy that those people were inspired about meats, drinks, and medicines? If not—what were the limitations? Do they believe that the 'opinions' of prophets and apostles were as infallible as a 'Thus saith the Lord,' or as impeccable as the conduct of the Christ? Were the interlocutors in the Drama of Job of equal authority? If not, what do the citations *prove?* Were any one of them experts in vital chemistry? Does the writer who cites Burns' line, 'Let him drink until he wink,' to drown his care—give this as a command or an authority?—and if not, why should a Jewish proverbialist, and perhaps sensualist, be of more authority than anybody else?

WHAT THE FRENCH MEDICAL ACADEMY SAYS.—"The rapid increase of intoxication due to [the use of] *manufactured* alcohols and *artificial* bouquets, causes a permanent danger to public health, and creates, both directly and by heredity, impulsive and criminal insanity, and physical and mental degeneration both of the Individual and the Race, constantly sapping the life and vigour of the land, and contributing to its depopulation and decadence. Science can convert the most impure alcohol into the *least poisonous*, which, however, is none the less essentially and always a POISON."

Mons. ROCHARD, in the debate, said—"Alcohol is a terrible power. The manufacturers hold the country enlaced in the meshes of a net of *Self-interest without pity*. Alcohol is the great IMPARTIAL ELECTOR, which flows for all the world on election days, but it never allows itself to be opposed—without fulminating calumnies and falsehoods."

AN ARTIST'S ASPIRATION.

I.

To grow by aught of Mind or hand in act,
  That shapes of Will parturient a gage
  To hide the bare sign manual—not for wage;—
To fix for eyes the precept in the Fact;
To hold the faith 'no Truth can be attackt
  Or hurt by any blind-worms of the stage
  Where we would walk, erect, from youth to age:
These aims are of Ideals all compact,—
  Art's self, the blind lark (heav'n born) in a cage
That strains to reach an aery so far lackt.

II.

To plan, erase, re-line; and thereby see
  The purport of the 'Life-School' we attend
  Like pages long in waiting, is to lend
Ourselves to One whose crown is Mastery.
Nude from life's alpha to omega, we—
  This sphere our soul's gymnasium to the end:
  Lacking this creed, what artist but must bend
To passing gods and false the feeble knee?
  Doubts of MORS JANUA VITÆ, God forfend!
Yet each true worker may Immortal be.

Feb. 1, 1896. FREDERIC ARNOLD.

QUESTIONS.

'Specimens of Alcoholic Intellect.'

[We are compelled to announce that we must decline a large correspondence by letter (and *all* queries not accompanied by a stamped envelope) relating to the advocacy of Temperance, as our days are short and our strength is lessening: but we shall still gladly give brief replies to questions under the above heading; still showing, as for fifty years past, that the Enemy has no case either in fact or philosophy. The time has now come for the plainest speaking, and the battle against the defenders of strong drink must be carried on without reserve. We will number the Objections for easy reference—and, if any opponent has the courage and ability to reply, our pages are open to him.]

1. *On the 'right' to Veto.* "If," says a Querist, "an act of Parliament confers on a community the right to close an objectionable drink-shop, ought it not *also* to confer the right to open one?"

Ans. Can't you see that this is an absurdity and contradiction? If the business be *objectionable*, how can it be right? The reason for closing the shop, cannot be the reason for opening it. Besides, no Parliament can confer the right to do wrong—the only justification of its existence is, that it shall do good, by protecting the community from mischief. But no institution in the world ever did so much mischief as the evil business of making and selling strong drink.

2. "If," says another querist, a Radical, "the Democracy *vetoes* the liquor traffic, that can give *no right* to a single Landowner to prevent a Drink-shop on his estate, if the Community so votes." Certainly not—because neither Demos nor Autos can *make* rights. If the Gin-shop, or Gambling-house, or Brothel, however, be *not* 'right' but 'wrong'—then, under the first and universal law of morals, both individuals and community must put forth *all the power they possess*, however acquired, to *do* good and *prevent* evil. Even the poor, purblind *Licensing World* and the Drink-shop papers saw this, when they got up the cry against Lady Henry Somerset that she had drink-shops on her estate. So she has—but the legal power was not in her hands. The objection is its own refutation: for the Community has always opposed the freedom of the trade, including Mr Gladstone. But is it not evident, that if the *business* be 'a right,' and not a privilege, then society is a violator of right in preventing *anyone* from becoming a 'Publican'?

3. Did Mr Gladstone ever say so? Say what? That free trade in liquor would be best for the Community? Or did he not mean (what seems plain) that the monopoly is *a strong and corrupt interest* that stands in the path of sobriety, and must *first* be destroyed by open-sale and competition, when the profits on the liquor sold would sink 50 per cent. At present, this Monopolistic Frankenstein has become the enemy alike of law and government. Indeed, *its* selfish money interest is avowedly its primary politics.

Our friends will be glad to know, that after a serious attack of illness for some weeks, utterly prostrating him, the Editor is now satisfactorily recovered, every dangerous symptom having gradually disappeared under the constant and skilful treatment of his friend Dr Norman Kerr. Hence the delay in the issue of this our occasional pamphlet. Public speaking being at an end, for the present, will our friends kindly endeavour to extend our *Post* circulation?

Dr Lees' birthday is on the 15th March, not either in February as stated in *Alliance Almanac*, or in May, as given in *Abstainer's Advocate*.